The Southern PATRIOT

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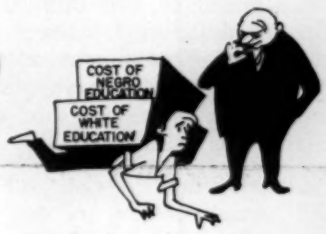
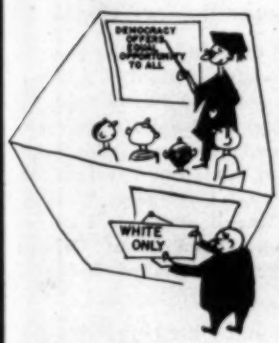
10 REASONS WHY THE REGIONAL SCHOOL PLAN SHOULD BE OPPOSED

The Southern Conference Educational Fund is opposed to the Board of Control for Southern Regional Education because it perpetuates segregation and inequality in education. It is based on prejudice instead of science. Here are 10 valid reasons why it is opposed.

1. Discriminatory and unconstitutional.



2. Uneconomic and unreasonable.



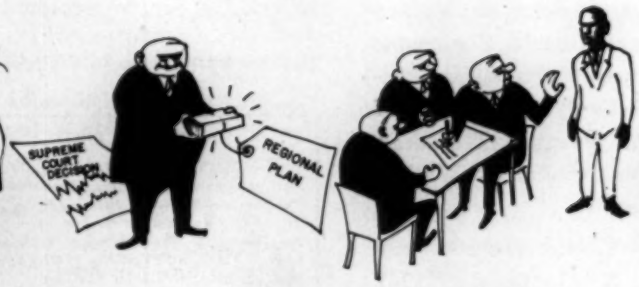
3. Thwarts basic purposes of a university.

4. A brake on present trend toward integration.

5. An unnecessary expedient.

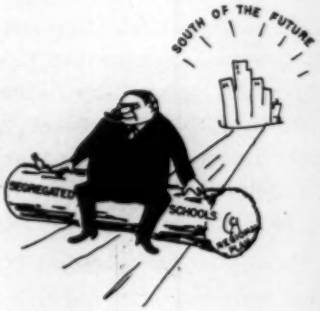
6. Limits rather than expands existing facilities.

7 Makes legal redress more difficult.



8. Not an honest answer to an educational problem

9. Formulated in an undemocratic manner.



10. Roadblock to all regional progress.

Southern Patriot Chart

Regional School Plan Begins In September

In September, 1949, the first students will matriculate under the new regional plan for graduate and professional training now approved by the legislatures of 10 Southern and border states. The plan will be administered by the Board of Control for Southern Regional Education, formally organized on July 11, 1949 at Daytona Beach Florida.

At present the plan will operate in only three fields, medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine. Certain designated colleges and universities operating such professional schools will accept out of state students. Such students will be accepted on the same basis as residents of the states where these institutions are located.

Meharry Medical College at Nashville, Tennessee, will furnish medical and dental training, and Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, will provide veterinary medical training for Negro students. Twelve institutions will accept out of state white students:—*Medicine*: Duke, Emory, Louisiana State, Tennessee, Tulane and Vanderbilt; *Dentistry*: Emory, Loyola of Louisiana, Maryland, Tennessee, Medical College of Virginia; *Veterinary Medicine*: Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Georgia, Oklahoma A. & M. College.

In the early phase of the plan, the establishing of regional universities operated by the Board, as authorized in the compact, was considered, but was put aside in favor of "contracts for services".

The Board will receive and administer funds. Contracts will be made between the Board and the participating institutions. For each medical and dental student the institution will receive $1,500, and $1,000 for each student in veterinary medicine. A budget of $1,736,00 for the first biennium was approved. Each state will pay $7,000 per year for administrative expenses.

The Board of Control is composed of the Governor, and three members appointed by the Governor, from each of the participating states. Officers are Millard F. Caldwell, former Governor of Florida, Chairman; Clyde A. Erwin, Superintendent of Public Instruction, N. C., Vice-President; H. C. Byrd, President of the University of Maryland, Secretary-Treasurer. Dr. John E. Ivy, Jr. is the Director, and Dr. William J. McGlothlin, Associate Director.

It was at the meeting of the Conference of Southern Governors at Asheville, N. C., October 1947 that the plan was launched with the appointment of a committee to study the question. On February 8, 1948 the Committee submitted a compact to the Conference of Southern Governors meeting at Tallahassee, Florida. It provided for the operation of Meharry Medical College at Nashville, Tennessee, serving Negro students. Meharry was having financial difficulties and offered the school for regional ownership and management.

The Governors of 14 of the 15 states interested in the plan signed the compact. The Governor of Kentucky abstained. It was agreed to present the compact to Congress for approval.

Eight days later, February 16, H.J. Res. 334, giving Congressional consent to the compact, was hastily reported favorably by the House Committee on the Judiciary, without benefit of public hearings. It was adopted 236 to 45.

Senate hearings on S.J. Res. 191 were held March 12-13. Appearing in support of the compact were a number of Congressmen, governors, and educators. The only Negro to testify in favor of the Resolution was an official of Meharry Medical College. Among the agencies appearing in opposition were:

National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses; National Medical Association; National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; National Dental Association; National Negro Insurance Association; National Constitutional Liberties Committee of the National Lawyers' Guild; Negro Newspaper Publishers' Association; American Teachers' Association; National Alliance of Postal Employees; Washington Bureau National Fraternal Council of Negro Churches of America; Conference of Negro Land Grant Coleges; and Civil Rights Division of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

On the first day of the Senate hearings Senator John S. Cooper of Kentucky withdrew his name as one of the sponsors of the Resolution. On the final vote to recommit both Kentucky Senators voted against the compact.

On May 13, by a margin of only one vote, (38 to 37), the Senate recommitted the Resolution to the Judiciary Committee which had the effect of killing the measure.

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Ten Reasons Why We Oppose the Regional Plan

Our opposition to the current regional plan of education rests entirely on the fact that it is based on racial segregation.

The plan is:

1. Discriminatory and unconstitutional.

"Separate but equal" schools, the legalistic euphemism used to designate the Jim Crow school system, is a pure abstraction unsupported by historic fact. In all of the 17 states which require separate schools by law there is not one instance where the state supported college for Negroes is even remotely equal in its facilities to those available to white students. There is no evidence to indicate that the segregated regional centers operated jointly by the Southern states will be any less discriminatory than the segregated institutions operated individually by the same authorities.

Since the regional plan discriminates on the basis of race, it is unconstitutional. The U. S. Supreme Court has ruled in the Gaines and Sipuel cases that the legal training made available by a state to white students must at the same time be available within the borders of that state to Negro students. To require a Negro medical student from Richmond, Va. to leave his home state and travel several hundred miles to Nashville, Tennessee, to receive his training while his white brother may receive such instruction in his home city, is clearly discriminatory.

2. Uneconomic and unreasonable.

Even if the theory of separate but equal schools were a true statement of present fact, or were possible of attainment, the plan still would be undesirable because it is wasteful and unreasonable to build parallel and expensive laboratory, library, and other facilities without reference to need. Furthermore segregation is based on the premise of superior and inferior races, an idea which we know to be scientifically unsound. If we are honest, we must admit that such an obeisance to the prejudices of our grandfathers is a stupid and expensive anachronism.

3. Thwarts the basic purposes of a university.

If the purpose of our schools is merely to perpetuate narrow, traditional patterns of thinking and acting, then our segregated schools are good enough. But if the purpose of our schools is to substitute scientific attitudes for prejudice and to educate for a new world, for one world based on our rich heritage of freedom, equality and brotherhood, then clearly segregation is out of place. Segregated schools cannot educate for an integrated world.

The art and practice of democratic procedures cannot be taught by the lecture method alone, least of all in Jim Crow class rooms, but must be learned the hard way, by actual practice. A school of science without scientific laboratories is no more of a caricature of an educational institution than is a university which purports to prepare youth for a democratic society, yet denies to its students a laboratory in which to practice democratic human relationships.

4. A brake on the present trend toward integration in existing institutions.

Today in 7 states where separate schools are maintained by law, Negroes are admitted in one or more graduate and professional schools of the state university. Much of this progress was made even while the regional plan was being formulated. The very existence of the regional plan will serve as a deterrent to such progress.

5. An unnecessary expedient.

If the regional plan of segregated graduate and professional training had been proposed 50 years ago, it might have been justified by the argument that it was a necessary expedient. Such is not the case today. There is the entirely favorable experience referred to above in the state universities. In addition there is an abundance of evidence in polls of faculty and student opinion to indicate that there is a willingness and readiness to accept Negroes now in existing institutions.[1]

6. Limits rather than expands existing facilities.

With the exception of the University of Arkansas medical school which accepted its first Negro student last year, Meharry is the only institution, public or private, in the 13 Southern states where Negroes may receive medical training. In 1947 there were 800 candidates for the 65 open places in the first year class at Meharry.

If the allotments of the regional plan are accepted, Meharry will receive $300,000 annually in tuition fees for the next two years. This is the extent of the aid to Meharry, a drop in the bucket compared to the vast sums which the Southern states will spend this year for its medical schools for white citizens.

In spite of this lack of training for Negro doctors, in the 17 states and the District of Columbia where separate schools are maintained by law, there are five times more white doctors in proportion to the white population as Negro doctors in proportion to the Negro population, (1 to every 843, compared to 1 to every 4,409).